

KENTUCKY TRANSPORTATION CABINET



SCENIC HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS GUIDELINES AND APPLICATION

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INTRODUCTION

The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991 established a Scenic Byways Advisory Committee to develop a national scenic byways program. ISTEA further encouraged the individual states to institute state scenic byway programs. The 1998 General Assembly codified this program in Kentucky Revised Statute (KRS) 177.573. 603 Kentucky Administration Regulation (KAR) 4:055 also relates to this program. The Commonwealth of Kentucky through the Transportation Cabinet has initiated a Scenic Highways and Byways Program in Kentucky.

A scenic highway or byway has roadsides or viewsheds with scenic (aesthetic), natural, cultural, historical, archaeological and/or recreational value worthy of preservation, restoration, protection, and enhancement. Scenic highways would be roads which meet the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) guidelines for highways and are state maintained as part of the State Primary Road System. These roads would carry greater traffic volumes at higher travel speeds than the scenic byways. Scenic byways would be roads of lower traffic volumes and slower travel speeds. These byways would not necessarily be state maintained; however, safety of travel would be a prime consideration.

The Transportation Cabinet has oversight responsibility for the Scenic Highways and Byways Program. The Cabinet serves to:

- Establish specific criteria for designation as a scenic highway or byway
- Review applications for designation to statewide scenic system
- Officially designate routes as part of statewide scenic system
- Oversee statewide signage and promotion (in corporation with the Tourism Cabinet)
- Administer funds for projects related to the scenic system
- Be a central repository and clearinghouse for information
- Provide technical support

- Provide for safety and service of traveling public
- Ensure integrity of system through oversight and de-designation when appropriate
- Work with Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to incorporate any applicable Kentucky scenic routes into the national network

When the Transportation Cabinet places a route on the Kentucky Scenic Highways and Byways program, the Cabinet is only designating the actual roadway and the associated declared right-of-way. Designation as a scenic route will not affect the level of maintenance or the agency responsible for maintenance. The ongoing responsibility and concern shall be to ensure safety and travel service on the road.

DESIGNATION OF A ROUTE AS A SCENIC HIGHWAY OR BYWAY SHALL IN NO WAY BE CONSTRUED AS PROHIBITING THE TRANSPORTATION CABINET FROM MAKING TRANSPORTATION-RELATED IMPROVEMENTS AS DEEMED APPROPRIATE BY THE CABINET.

Construction and maintenance procedures for the roads with scenic designation may be developed to reasonably provide for the safety and service of the traveling public. Projects may be accomplished by the Cabinet to mitigate safety problems or improve the quality of the road. If designation as a scenic route jeopardizes public safety, the Cabinet can and will deny and/or remove the route from the scenic program.

The Transportation and Tourism Interagency Committee as established in Kentucky Revised Statutes (KRS) 177.107, 177.108 and 177.109 advises the Transportation Cabinet on Scenic Highways and Byways. Criteria and guidelines have been formulated to assist local, regional, or statewide groups in submitting a route for possible scenic designation. The submittal process is to define and standardize documentation so all groups may be treated consistently relative to evaluation of their route as a scenic highway or byway.

The Transportation Cabinet envisions a Scenic Highways and Byways Program based on strong local and/or regional support and commitment. Applicant groups are to unite public and private support and resources along the route. They are to prepare the

application for designation of the route as part of the state scenic program. Applicant groups will have primary responsibility for the ongoing monitoring of the scenic qualities of the viewshed or adjacent land areas. Failure to act responsibly in this management role may result in the loss of the qualities which make the route scenic. Changes in the scenic character may result in review by the Transportation Cabinet and possible removal of the designation as a scenic highway or byway.

The Transportation Cabinet views the Scenic Highways and Byways Program as a unique opportunity for government, private citizens and organizations through cooperative efforts to protect the state's natural scenic resources, promote tourism, foster associated economic development, and maximize the potential of little traveled or bypassed roads.

***GENERAL APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR
CONSIDERATION OF A ROADWAY FOR DESIGNATION AS A
KENTUCKY SCENIC HIGHWAY OR BYWAY***



NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

- A narrative description of the proposed route including the general location, the physical characteristics, and the scenic components of the proposed route.
- General location should include the location within the state, the county and/or city, the road name and/or number, beginning and ending termini, and length.
- Physical characteristics of the road should include pavement type for the roadway and shoulders, and road and shoulder widths.
- The description should detail the pre-eminent scenic, natural, cultural, historical, archeological, and/or recreational components of the landscape along the route.
- Descriptions of the natural components of the road should include type of view (i.e., panoramic, valley, enclosed, enframed, etc.), natural formations (i.e., cliffs, ridges, mountains, etc.), vegetation (i.e., wildflowers, forests, pastures, etc.), and other components that add to the scenic enhancement of the view.

MAP

- A map (or maps) should be submitted marking the location of the proposed route and the scenic roadsides or viewsheds along the route.
- The pre-eminent scenic, natural, cultural, historical, archeological, and/or recreational features that were listed in the narrative description of the route should be clearly located on the map(s).
- All maps are to be general highway maps or topographic (contour) maps which show the surrounding roads and area.
- The map(s) should also show adjacent development in the area.

VISUAL SUBMISSION

- Visual submission should be 3½" x 5" or 4" x 6" color photographs.
- Photographs are to be mounted on an 8½" x 11" size sheet of paper with a description of the view being shown and a location key to reference the location to the map(s) of the route. No more than 2 photographs per sheet of paper.
- A video may also be submitted. It must be in VHS format, professionally produced, be no more than 30 minutes in length and show views from the route that are significant.
- All major components of the route should be covered by the photographs or video.

SCENIC ROADS EVALUATION FORMS

- Scenic Roads Evaluation Forms are to be submitted for each mile of the proposed route.
- The forms are to be completed according to the instructions on the back of the form.
- One form is required for each of the viewsheds in each direction of the route; therefore, two (2) forms are needed for each one (1) mile of road and any additional fraction of a mile.

AGREEMENT FROM MAINTENANCE ORGANIZATION

- Evidence of support from the organization responsible for the maintenance of the route should be submitted stating that the organization or agency agrees to the designation of the route as a scenic highway or byway.
- This evidence of support can be in the form of a letter from the agency having maintenance jurisdiction over the route. If the scenic route consists of road segments maintained by more than one organization, a letter of support regarding scenic designation should be included from each organization.

EVIDENCE OF LOCAL SUPPORT

- Evidence of significant local support is to be submitted.
- Local support organizations should include local governments, landowners, and constituent groups.
- Evidence of support (which indicate concern and support for scenic designation) can include letters from local agencies, community groups, city or county government officials, and/or residents along the route, etc., which indicate concern and support for scenic designation.

EVIDENCE OF SCENIC QUALITY PRESERVATION

- Designation of a road as Scenic does not alter any existing land use restrictions or regulations, the preservation of scenic qualities are a local responsibility.
- If possible, documents should be included which detail both short and long term plans for preservation.
- These documents should list present types of preservation (e.g., zoning, right-of-way, acquisition of viewshed areas, etc.) and proposed preservation devices.

OPTIONAL INFORMATION

- Optional information may include brochures, magazine articles, or newspaper articles featuring the scenic, cultural, historical, natural, archeological, and/or recreational elements along the route or the route itself.
- Documentation about historical events, local legends or folktales, festivals or celebrations in the area of the route can also be included.

OTHER SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

- Four (4) copies of all information (only one copy of photographs and video) should be submitted to:

Kentucky Scenic Highways and Byways Program
Kentucky Transportation Cabinet
Division of Planning
State Office Building A-2
Frankfort, Kentucky 40622